

their bonds being very large, it was in some cases very troublesome to comply with.)

The consolidation was effected promptly and without confusion. Taking place at the end of the pay-month, the pensioners were more than usually prompt in applying for their pensions, which were due on the 4th of June, and comparatively few payments remained to be made in July and August, and the payments at the consolidated agencies, in most cases, being taken up as early as July 20, and in all cases before the end of the month, very little inconvenience was experienced by the pensioners.

Except in a few instances, so far as I have been informed, the conduct of the gentlemen whose offices were discontinued by the Executive order was admirable. Many of them, notwithstanding they were about to be cut off from offices at once honorable and lucrative, expressed their approval of the consolidation in hearty terms.

The quarterly payment due September 4 has been successfully accomplished by the consolidated agencies. The payments have been made as promptly as the quarterly payments were heretofore made, and when it is considered that at this payment the invalid pensioners were required to undergo their biennial examinations, which largely increased the work of the payment over that necessary at other payments, the result is peculiarly gratifying and satisfactory.

I received a daily report from each agency during the month of September, beginning with the 4th, showing the number of vouchers received by mail for payment, the number of pensioners paid by mailing their checks, and the number paid in person at the office. These reports have been tabulated and are herewith presented. (Table XII.)

The whole number of pensioners on the rolls of the several agencies on the 30th of June was 232,104; 187,403 of these were paid in September; 6,040 more applied who would have been paid in September if the surgeons' certificates of the biennial examinations had been received, the delay being no fault of the agents; 153,361 were paid by mail, and 29,042 in person at the agencies. Those paid, augmented by the 6,040 who would have been paid but for the lack of the surgeons' certificates, makes 83½ per cent. of the whole number on the rolls; 41,211 applied and were paid on the first four pay-days, and of the 153,361 to whom checks were mailed, 88,207, considerably more than one-half, were paid in the first nine pay-days.

On the fifth pay-day, Boston, Canandaigua, and New York City agencies began to reduce the number of accumulated vouchers; on the sixth pay-day, Columbus, Concord, and San Francisco; on the seventh, Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, New Orleans, Philadelphia, and Washington; on the eighth, Pittsburgh at Saint Louis; on the ninth, Des Moines and Knoxville; and on the tenth pay-day, Louisville.

The difference in time when the respective agents began to pay pensions by mail faster than the vouchers were received by the same source, and so reduce the number of unpaid vouchers awaiting payment in their offices, is not altogether due either to the relative efficiency of the agents or to the manner of conducting their offices. Much is attributable to the difference in the mail facilities, and to other causes not affecting the character of the agents.

It will be understood that the bringing together, in each of the consolidated agencies, of so many roll-books has made the rolls very unwieldy. This, added to the bad condition of many of those rolls, has made the last September payment a very difficult and expensive one to agents.

Preliminary steps have been taken to effect a consolidation of the rolls in the several agencies upon a uniform plan; and when this shall have been done, the payments will be even more prompt than the last and the agencies will be more economically operated.

It is too early to state the precise cost of making the payments during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1877. It will not, however, greatly differ from that of the previous year. Upon the basis of that year the consolidation saves to the Government, in salaries of the agents, one hundred and forty-two thousand dollars (\$142,000) per annum.

In addition to the percentages upon payments made which represents their respective salaries, each agent receives twenty-five cents for each voucher paid by him, which, with some small allowances for postage, &c., is supposed to reimburse him for the expenses of his office, made up of rent, fuel, lights, clerk-hire, &c. In my judgment, this plan of reimbursement of expenses is a bad one, and, since the consolidation of the agencies, it results in paying too large a sum of money for that purpose in all cases, except at San Francisco and New Orleans. The rolls of these agencies being small, the agency expenses are greater in proportion to the number of pensions paid.

Of the eighteen agents, nine have their offices in buildings belonging to the Government, and pay nothing for rent, fuel, and lights.

In view of this, I recommend that a fixed sum be allowed for every 1,000 payments made each quarter, to cover postage, stationery, and clerk-hire, and that no other allowance be made for the agents' disbursements except for rent, fuel, and lights, and making new rolls. All leases, as well as the bills for fuel and light, and making new rolls, to be approved by the Secretary of the Interior before payment.

If a revision of the fees and compensation of pension agents shall be made upon the above plan, it cannot fail to effect a considerable additional saving to the Government.

Very respectfully,

J. A. BENTLEY,  
Commissioner.

The Honorable the Secretary of the Interior.

If you do not want to be dropped from the Pension rolls nor have your pension reduced, subscribe for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE. Subscription price only fifty cents per year.

#### Bills Introduced.

In the Senate of the United States, on the 16th ultimo, Mr. Ingalls asked and, by unanimous consent obtained leave to bring in the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Pensions.

[S. 4.]

#### A Bill granting arrears of pensions.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That all pensions which have been, or may hereafter be, granted in consequence of death occurring from a cause which originated in the service of the United States since the fourth day of March, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, or in consequence of wounds or injuries received or disease contracted since said date, shall commence from the date of the death or discharge from the United States service of the person on whose account the claim has been, or shall hereafter be, granted, or from the termination of the right of the party having prior title to such pension: *Provided*, That the limitation herein prescribed shall not apply to claims by or in behalf of insane persons or minor children of deceased soldiers.

SEC. 2. That immediately upon the passage of this act the Commissioner of Pensions shall cause a copy of the same to be furnished each pension-agent, whose duty it shall be to notify each pensioner upon his roll who shall be entitled to arrears of pensions under this act. And it shall be the further duty of the Commissioner of Pensions to pay, or cause to be paid, to such pensioner, or if the pensioner shall have died, to the person or persons entitled to the same, all such arrears of pensions as the pensioner may be entitled to, or, if dead, would have been entitled to, under the provisions of the first section of this act, had he or she survived.

All persons interested in the passage of the Arrears of Pension Bill should subscribe for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

[S. 17.]

A bill amending the laws granting pensions to the soldiers and sailors of the war of 1812 and their widows.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby authorized and directed to place on the pension-rolls the names of the surviving officers and enlisted and drafted men, without regard to color, including militia and volunteers, of the military and naval service of the United States, who served for fourteen days in the war with Great Britain of eighteen hundred and twelve, and who were in any engagement, and were honorably discharged, and the surviving widows of such officers and enlisted and drafted men: *Provided*, That such widows shall have been married prior to the year eighteen hundred and fifty to such officers or enlisted or drafted men.

SEC. 2. That this act shall not apply to any person who is receiving a pension at the rate of eight dollars per month or more, nor to any person receiving a pension of less than eight dollars per month except for the difference between the pension now received (if less than eight dollars per month) and eight dollars per month. Pensions under this act shall be at the rate of eight dollars per month, except as herein provided, and shall be paid to the person entitled thereto, from and after the passage of this act, for and during their natural lives: *Provided*, That the pensions to widows provided for in this act shall cease when they shall marry again.

SEC. 3. That before the name of any person shall be placed upon the pension-rolls under this act, proof shall be made, under such rules and regulations as the Commissioner of Pension with the approval of the Secretary of the Interior, shall prescribe, that the applicant is entitled to a pension under this act; and any person who shall falsely take any oath required to be taken under the provisions of this act shall be guilty of perjury; and the Secretary of the Interior shall cause to be stricken from the rolls the name of any person, when it shall appear, by proof satisfactory to him, that such name was put on said rolls by or through false and fraudulent representations, or by mistake as to the right of such person to a pension under this act. The loss or lack of a certificate of discharge shall not deprive the applicant of the benefit of this act, but other proof of the service performed and of an honorable discharge, if satisfactory, shall be deemed sufficient; and when there is no record evidence of such service and such discharge, the applicant may establish the same by other satisfactory testimony: *Provided*, That when any person has been granted a land-warrant under any act of Congress for and on account of service in the said war of eighteen hundred and twelve, such grant shall be prima-facie evidence of his service and honorable discharge, so as to entitle him, if living, or his widow, if he be dead, to a pension under this act; but such evidence shall not be conclusive, and may be rebutted by evidence that such land-warrant was improperly granted.

SEC. 4. That all applications for pensions of the classes provided for in this act heretofore or which may hereafter be made shall be considered and decided as though made under this act; and all laws now in force in regard to the manner of paying pensions, and in reference to the punishment of frauds, shall be applicable to all claims under the provisions of this act.

SEC. 5. That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to restore to the pension-rolls the names of all persons now surviving heretofore pensioned on account of service in the war of eighteen hundred and twelve against Great Britain, or for service in any of the Indian wars, and whose names were stricken from the rolls in pursuance of the act entitled "An act authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to strike from the pension rolls the names of such persons as have taken up arms against the Government, or who have in any manner encouraged the rebels," approved February fourth, eighteen hundred and sixty-two; and that the joint resolution entitled "Joint resolution prohibiting payment by any officer of the Government to any person not known to have been opposed to the rebellion and in favor of its suppression," approved March second, eighteen hundred and sixty-seven, and section four thousand one hundred and sixteen of the Revised Statutes at large of the United States, shall not apply to the persons provided for by this act; *Provided*, That no money shall be paid to any one on account of arrears during his term of disability.

SEC. 6. That the surviving widow of any pensioner of the war of eighteen hundred and twelve having married prior to the year eighteen hundred and fifty, where the name of said pensioner was stricken from the pension-rolls in pursuance of the act entitled "An act authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to strike from the pension-rolls the names of such persons as have taken up arms against the Government, or who in any manner encouraged the rebels," approved February fourth, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, and where, under the existing provisions of law, said pensioner died without his name being restored to the rolls, shall be entitled to make claim for a pension as such widow after the passage of this act: *Provided*, That no such arrears shall be paid for any period prior to the time of the removal of the disability of the pensioner, as provided in section five: And *provided further*, That under this act any widow of a revolutionary soldier who served sixty days shall be placed upon the pension-rolls of the United States, and receive a pension at the rate of eight dollars per month.

SEC. 7. That all laws and clauses of laws in conflict with this act be, and they are hereby, repealed.

Soldiers of the war of 1812, and the widows of such soldiers, should subscribe for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

[S. 108.]

A Bill to equalize the bounties of soldiers who served in the late war for the Union.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be allowed and paid to each and every non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, and private soldier, sailor, and marine, including those borne

on the rolls as slaves and Indians, who faithfully served as such in the military service of the United States, who have been honorably discharged from such service, the sum of eight and one-third dollars a month for all the time which such non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, and private soldier, sailor, and marine actually so served, between the twelfth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-one, and the ninth day of May, eighteen hundred and sixty-five. And the provisions of this act shall extend to all soldiers who were mustered into the service of the United States, and were subsisted, clothed, and paid by the Government of the United States.

SEC. 2. That in case of the death, either before or after the passage of this act, of any such non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, or private soldier, sailor, or marine, the allowance and payment shall be made to his widow, if she has not remarried, or if there be no widow, or she has remarried, then to the minor child or children of such deceased non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, or private soldier, sailor, or marine.

SEC. 3. That in computing and ascertaining the bounty to be paid to any non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, or private soldier, sailor, or marine, or to his proper representatives, under the provisions of this act, there shall be deducted therefrom any and all bounties already paid under the provisions of any United States laws.

SEC. 4. That no bounty under the provisions of this act shall be paid to or on account of any soldier who served as a substitute in the Army, or who was a captured prisoner of war at the time of his enlistment, nor to any one who was discharged, on his own application or request, for other cause than disability incurred in the service, prior to the nineteenth day of April, eighteen hundred and sixty-five, unless such discharge was obtained with a view to re-enlistment, or to accept promotion in the military or naval service of the United States, or to be transferred from one branch of the military service to another, and such person did actually so re-enlist or accept promotion, or was so transferred; and no bounty shall be paid to any soldier discharged on the application or at the request of parents, guardians, or other persons, or on the grounds of minority.

SEC. 5. That every petition or application for bounty made under the provisions of this act shall disclose and state specifically, under oath and under the pains and penalties of perjury, what amount of bounty has been paid under the provisions of any United States laws to the non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, or private soldier, sailor, or marine, by whom or by whose representative the claim is made.

SEC. 6. That any attorney or agent who shall receive from any claimant a sum greater than ten dollars for the prosecution of any claim under the provisions of this act, upon conviction thereof, shall pay a fine not to exceed one thousand dollars, or imprisonment for a term not less than one year, or both, as the court or the jury may adjudge, and shall forever thereafter be excluded from prosecuting claims of any nature whatsoever against the Government of the United States.

SEC. 7. That it shall not be lawful for any soldier to transfer, assign, barter, or sell his discharge final statement, descriptive-list, or other paper, for the purpose of transferring, assigning, bartering, or selling any interest in any bounty under the provisions of this act. And all such transfers, assignments, barter, or sales heretofore made are hereby declared null and void as to any rights intended to be so conveyed by any such soldier.

SEC. 8. That in any case where a person entitled to receive payment of bounty under the provisions of this act shall make application therefor, or where such application shall be made by the proper representative of such person, being deceased, and the discharge of such person has been lost, it shall be competent for the accounting-officers to receive, in lieu of the actual production of such discharge, proof of the actual loss of the same, and secondary proof of its issue and contents, together with proof of the identity of the claimant or person deceased, under such rules defining the character and form of the evidence as the Secretary of the Treasury shall prescribe.

SEC. 9. That no adjustment or payment of any claim of any non-commissioned officer, musician, artificer, wagoner, or private soldier, sailor, or marine, or his proper representative, under the provisions of this act, shall be made unless the application be filed within five years of the passage of the same.

All persons interested in the passage of the Bounty Bill should subscribe for THE NATIONAL TRIBUNE.

[S. 77.]

A Bill granting pensions to certain soldiers and sailors of the war of 1846 with Mexico, and the widows of deceased soldiers and sailors.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Interior be, and he is hereby, authorized and directed to place on the pension-roll the names of the surviving officers and enlisted men, including militia and volunteers, of the military and naval service of the United States, who served sixty days in the war of eighteen hundred and forty-six with Mexico, and were honorably discharged, and to such other officers and soldiers as may have been personally named in any resolution of Congress for any specific service in said war, although their term of service may have been less than sixty days, and who shall subscribe an oath to support the Constitution of the United States; and the surviving widows of such officers and enlisted men: *Provided*, That such widows shall have not remarried.

SEC. 2. That this act shall not apply to any person who is receiving a pension at the rate of eight dollars or more per month; nor to any person receiving a pension less than eight dollars per month, except for the difference between the pension now received and eight dollars per month. Pensions under this act shall be at the rate of eight dollars per month, except as herein provided, when a person is receiving a pension of less than eight dollars per month, and shall be paid to the persons entitled thereby from and

(Continued on page 18.)